

**Testimony of Bernadette Conway in favor of  
Raised Bill 5868, An Act Concerning Recruiting in High Schools  
March 10, 2008**

My name is Bernadette Conway. I live in Newington and I am here to testify in favor of Raised Bill 5868, An Act Concerning Recruiting in High Schools.

Last year I was very surprised to get a call from a man asking for my 16 year old son. I asked who he was and he replied that he was calling from the US Army Recruitment Center. I was shocked and taken aback by his call. My son was just a junior at the time and not even in possession of a driver's license yet. Wasn't even shaving yet. I was still driving and picking him up from football practice and to the movies with his friends. And here was this man trying to get him to enlist during wartime.

We are a family that discusses local and world issues at the dinner table, so I don't try to shield my children from what I find to be uncomfortable issues. I raise them to be active in our community and socially conscious. But when someone calls your home from the army, and I know exactly why he is calling, I went into defensive\ protective mode.

I just couldn't help but think about how hard I've worked to keep him safe and protected from the many pitfalls that could send him in the wrong direction. All the years and time I've spent, and still spend as a mother doing the right thing to get him to the point where he is a productive adult in our community making the right choices. And here was this man calling my boy to recruit him for a war that I personally feel is wrong.

Now, I won't go any further into my personal feelings about the war, but I will say I feel very strongly that children should not be contacted about joining the service until they are old enough to actually serve. One of my son's friends signed up in the summer between his junior and senior year because he wanted to help his family out financially and needed the bonus. Other parents are calling me for help with staving off recruiters. Recruitment should wait until they are considered and recognized as an adult - 18 years old. Thank you for your time.